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ACTION EA 19

INFO NSCE 00,CIAE 00,SSO 00,DODE 00,USIE 00,NSAE 00,CCO 00,SAL 01,
EUR 25,IO 21,SP 02,SS 35,GPM 03,SC 01,NSC 10,RSC 01,P 04,INR 07,
SAH 03,L 03,H 02,AID 30,RSR 01,/168 W

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Fran Izenberg DATE 12/23/81
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

P R 281130Z AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5512
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3056
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2294
AMCONSUL DANANG 817

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: SUU-DAN PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: SAIGON 4117

1. REFTEL REPORTED ASSOCIATED PRESS ACCOUNT OF REMARKS MADE BY DR. PHAN QUANG DAN IN PRESS CONFERENCE FOR FOREIGN JOURNALISTS AUG 25. FOLLOWING IS MORE COMPLETE ACCOUNT, TAKEN FROM UPI TAPE RECORDING, OF DR. DAN'S STATEMENTS ON

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PAGE 2 RUMJIR 4250/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
THE ELECTION, WAR AND NEGOTIATIONS.

2. ON THE ELECTION, DR. DAN SAID THAT IT IS FREER THAN PAST

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ELECTIONS, WHICH ALL THE CANDIDATES MUST ADMIT. CANDIDATES HAVE "FREELY AND VIOLENTLY" CRITIZED THE GOVERNMENT ON RADIO AND TV AND IN ELECTION RALLIES. ACCORDING TO DR. DAN, THIS CAMPAIGN IS "AS FREE AS ANY ELECTION CAMPAIGN ANYWHERE, INCLUDING THE US, VERY FREE, WE HAVE TO RECOGNIZE IT."

3. HOWEVER, THERE ARE IRREGULARITIES, WHICH RAISE SUSPICION. DR. DAN ADDED THAT THERE WAS CAUSE FOR SUSPICION EVEN BEFORE THE CAMPAIGN BEGAN. HE CITED DIRECTORATE DISAPPROVAL OF MINIMUM VOTE PERCENTAGE IN ELECTION LAW, REJECTION OF PROVISION REQUIRING CANDIDATES TO BE INTRODUCED (DIRECTORATE TACTIC WAS CLEAR, "TO SPLIT THE VOTE BY ENCOURAGING MANY CIVILIAN CANDIDATES");
AND KY'S PRE-CAMPAIGN PERIOD ELECTIONEERING. LAST OF THESE, SAID DAN, IS GROUNDS FOR DISQUALIFICATION UNDER ELECTION LAW. IF THIEU AND KY WIN, THEY WILL BE TAKEN TO COURT AND BE DISQUALIFIED. THIEU-KY TACTICS ARE DISXOURAGING, PROVING, DECLARED DAY, THAT "RULE OF LAW HAS BEEN DE-ESCALATED."

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4. DAN WENT ON TO CATALOGUE VARIOUS CURRENT "IRREGULARITIES." THIEU AND KY ORGANIZE THEIR OWN CAMPAIGN MEETINGS; THEY ALSO GIVE MONEY AROUND TO VOTERS" AT THESE MEETINGS. ALSO, POLICE CALL OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN WORKERS IN FOR INVESTIGATION , ND SOME HAVE BEEN ARRESTED. HOWEVER, WITH REGARD TO REPORTS OF INTIMIDATION, "SOME OF IT IS WELL-FOUNDED, SOME OF IT WITHOUT MUCH PROOF." ARRESTS "MAY BE FOR VARIOUS REASONS...NOT ONLY FOR WORKING FOR US." DAN EXPLAINED THAT SOME WORKERS MAY HAVE BEEN ARRESTED FOR VIOLATING DRAFT LAWS, OR FOR DISORDERLY CONDUCT. BECAUSE OF THAT POSSIBILITY SUU AND D. N HAVE NOT PROTESTED. BUT ARRESTS ARE NONTHELESS UNWISE AT THIS TIME SINCE THEY CREATE SUSPICION.

5. IN ADDITION, THERE ARE RUMORS THAT PROVINCE CHIEFS HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO TURN OUT 60 PERCENT VOTE FOR THIEU-KY; "AT LEAST ONE PROVINCE TOLD ME THAT." FINALLY, ACCORDING TO RUMOR, MANY PEOPLE HAVE TO VOTER CARDS.

6. "TO CONCLUDE", BUT STILL LOTS OF DISCONTENT." THERE IS

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PROGRESS IN THAT POLITICANS HAVE "ACCEPTED AT LEAST TO BEGIN TO PLAY THE CONSTITUTIONAL GAME." HE REITERATED THAT ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN IS "REALLY FREE," BUT THERE ARE STILL

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"SERIOUS IRREGULARITIES." FACT THAT "THE ADMINISTRATION DOES NOT RESPECT ELECTORAL LAWS IS HIGHLY WORRISOME.. I HAVE TO REPEAT THAT IN CASE THEY GET ELECTED AND LAW IS CORRECTLY APPLIED THEY WILL BE DISQUALIFIED. AS FOR RUMORS ABOUT RIGGING, THEY ARE PERSISTENT AND NOT WITHOUT FOUNDATION." "ADMINISTRATION" SHOULD TAKE STEPS TO ALLEVIATE SUSPICIONS WHICH HAVE ARISEN.

7. IN QUESTION PERIOD, DAN SAID HE SEEKS TO ENCOURAGE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE POSITIVE MEASURES TO CORRECT IRREGULARITIES. HE ALSO ELABORATED ON VARIOUS CHARGES OF GOVERNMENT MISCONDUCT. DAN ALLEGED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT IN GIA DINH AND DINH TUONG "ALL PUBLIC MEETINGS (OF CANDIDATES' REPRESENTATIVES) HAVE BEEN CANCELLED FOR REASONS OF SECURITY.. NONSENSE!" ALSO, IN VINH LONG, POLICE CHIEF PUTS UP THIEU-KY POSTERS. DAN AGAIN SAID, SOMEWHAT LESS POSITIVELY, HOWEVER, THAT IF THIEU AND KY ELECTED THEY WILL BE TAKEN TO COURT. ASKED HOW CORRESPONDENTS COULD TELL IF ELECTION IS RIGGED, DAN SAID IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY INSTANCES OF RIGGING, BUT "GENERAL ATMOSPHERE" WILL BE A GOOD

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GUIDE. ASKED IF HE AND SUU HAD THOUGHT OF WITHDRAWING AS MEANS OF PROTESTING GOVERNMENT TACTICS, DAN SAID "NO, NOT US... WE HAVE ALWAYS FOUGHT VERY HARD." DAN ADDED THAT EVEN UNDER DIEM BOTH HE AND SUU WON ELECTIONS. "I AM VERY HOPEFUL, DESPITE EVERYTHING, ELECTION MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE MORE HONEST THAN PEOPLE GENERALLY THINK, I HOPE SO." BLOWING COLD AGAIN, DAN SAID THAT "PROVINCE CHIEFS ACTIVITIES ADD TO GENERAL SUSPICION:" HOWEVER, HE THEN ADDED THAT "I ACCEPT THAT THEY (PROVINCE CHIEFS) CAMPAIGN PRIVATELY FOR GOVENMENT,

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BUT THEY MUST NOT TRY TO RIG ELECTIONS." RIGGING "HASNOT HAPPENED YET", BUT THERE ARE THOUSAND WAYS TO DO IT. ONE IS TO ISSUE TWO VOTER CARDS (HE SUGGESTED THAT VOTERS' ID CARDS BE PUCHED OR MARKED IN INDELIBLE INK AS BETTER WAY OF CHECKING ON NUMBER OF ACTUAL VOTERS). ANOTHER SUSPICIOUS DEVELOPMENT IS RECENT INCREASE IN NUMBER OF POLLING PLACES WHICH WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT TO MONITOR ELECTION PROCEDURES."
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ACTION EA 19

INFO NSCE 00,CIAE 00,SSO 00,DODE 00,USIE 00,NSAE 00,CCO 00,SAL 01,
EUR 25,IO 21,SP 02,SS 35,GPM 03,SC 01,NSC 10,RSC 01,P 04,INR 07,
SAH 03,L 03,H 02,RSR 01,AID 30,/168 W

P R 281130Z AUG 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5513
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 3957
CINCPAC
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE 2295
AMCONSUL DANANG 0818

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CINCPAC FOR POLADD

SUBJ: SUU-DAN PRESS CONFERENCE

REF: SAIGON 4117

8. ON AMERICAN ELECTION OBSERVERS, DAN SAID IT IS A GOOD THING: GVN HAS INVITED FOREIGN OBSERVERS, WHY SHOULDN'T US SEND A DELEGATION. DAN FELT PRESENCE OF FOREIGN OBSERVERS, EVEN IF THEY CANNOT GO TO VILLAGES AND HAMLETS(WHERE RIGGING WILL BE EASIER), WILL BE HELPFUL.

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9/JDAN OBSERVED IN CONCULSION THAT "ELECTION WILL BE LESS FAIR THAN LAST YEAR...BECAUSE THEIR POWER IS AT STAKE."

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HOWEVER, IF ELECTION IS "80 PERCENT HONEST IT WILL BE FINE, 60 PERCENT IS ACCEPTABLE....LESS THAN THAT WOULD BE VERY BAD FOR PEOPLE."" IN ANSWER TO A LATER QUESTION ASKING HOW MANY CIVILIAN CANDIDATES MUST WITHDRAW IN ORDER FOR CIVILIAN TO BEAT THIEU-KY, DAN REPLIED "EVEN NOW WE HAVE A VERY GOOD CHANCE."

10. DAN THEN GAVE CORRESPONDENT RUNDOWN ON "GENERAL SITUATION, QUESTIONS OF WAR AND PEACE." HIS MAIN THEME WAS THAT THIS IS MAINLY A POLITICAL WAR VC ARE FIGHTING IT THAT WAY, OUR SIDE IS OVER-EMPHASIZING MILITARY ASPECT VC TRY TO ORGANIZE THE POPULATION WHILE OUR SIDE HAS MADE SCANT EFFORT IN THAT REGARD. WE CONTROL CITIES, AND DEVOTE MOST OF OUR EFFORT TO ADMINISTREFING THEM, VC CONTROL THE COUNTRYSIDE AND FOCUS ALL THEIR ATTENTION ON WAR. WE TRY TO HELP PEASANTS, BUT ARE HAMPERED BY LACK OF "CLEAR-CUT LAND POLICY;" VC GIVE PEASANTSNOTHING BUT DO OFFER THEM LAND.

11. "NOW", SAID DAN, "I THINK WE HAVE ENOUGH TROOPS HERE. ONE MILLION HEAVILY-EQUIPPED TROOPS, ENOUGH TO DEFEAT JAPAN

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 4250/2C O N F . D E N T I A L LIMITED OFFICIAL SSE OR GERMANY, BUT AGAINST THIS TIME NATION SUCH POLICY HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO END THE WAR. THERE IS NO NEED FOR ESCALATING THE SHOOTING WAR MORE THAN IT IS AT PRESENT TIME." VC MILITARY EFFORT "IS LIKE A TWO-STORY HOUSE, WE HAVE ESCALATED OURS 40 STORIES," AND LITTLE HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED. "TOO MANY FOREIGN TROOPS OVERPOWER VIETNAMESE ARMY," THEY PLAN SMALLER AND SMALLER ROLE "AND ARE TEMPTED TO SIT ON SIDEWALK AND LOOK AT HOW YOU FIGHT THE WAR." WAR HAS BECOME AMERICANIZED, WHICH IS NOT GOOD. VIETNAMESE EFFORTS MUST BE STRENGHTHENED SO THAT THEY TAKE MAIN BURDEN OF WAR WITH AMERICANS HELPING IN BIG BATTLES.

12. BUT WHILE "MILITARY HAS ESCALATED, EVERYTHING ELSE HAS BEEN DE-ESCALATED." TOO LITTLE HAS BEEN DONE IN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SPHERES. POLITICAL PARTIES AND UNIONS SHOULD BE ASSISTED, THEY ARE NOT. (DAN MENTIONED REJECTION OF VT UPPER HOUSE SLATE AND SAID HE DOES NOT KNOW

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"WHY GOVERNMENT IS AGAINST UNIONS.") IN ECONOMIC FIELD, DESPITE VAST EXPENDITUREES ("MORE THAN IN GERMANQDZL . ECONOMCY IS IN BAD SHAPE. WITH REGARD TO ECONOMIC AID, DAN ADDED THAT "EVEN MARSHAL KY HAS SAID THAT THERE ARE TOO MANY AMERICANS AROUND, DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THEM." SOCIAL NEEDS HAVE LIKEWISE BEEN NEGLECTED.

13. "FROM MILITARY POINT OF VIEW THERE SHOULD BE DE-ESCALATION.... BUT ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND SOCIAL EFFORTS SHOULD BE ESCALATED." SITUATION NOW IS "LIKE A CAR WITH FOUR WHEELS, ONE IS FULL OF AIR, THE OTHER THREE ARE FLAT; BUT WE KEEP PUMPING AIR INTO ONE WHICH IS ALREADY FULL." OR, SHIFTING TOA MEDICAL METAPHOR, VIET-NAM IS A PATIENT IN AN IRON LUNG; IT CAN BE KEPT ALIVE INDEFINITELY, BUT SHOULD BE MADE TO STAND ON ITS OWN TWO FEET. WE SHOULD NOT LOSE SIGHT OF PRINCIPLE THAT THIS WAR "IS A VIETNAMESE BUSINESS." NON-MILITARY EFFORTS SHOULD BE INTENSIFIED, DAN REITFRATED, IN ORDER TO "PRODUCE A NEW EQUILIBRIUM."

14. ON PEACE TALKS, DAN SAID THAT "WE WILL ORGANIZE NEGOTIATIONS ITH NORTH VIET-NAM, INCLUDING NLF, WE CONSIDER THEM AS BELONG-ING TO SAME ORGANIZATION. .MOVEMENT CONSIDER NLF AN INDEPENDENT ORGANIZATION, NOT A GOVERNMENT." BUT, THERE MUST BE NEGOTIATIONS, OR AT LEAST MORE CONTACT LEADING TO NEGOTIATIONS. WHOLE PROCESS MAY TAKE TIME. DURING THAT TIME, "WE HOPE THAT OUR MILITARY, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFORTS MIGHT BRING WAR TO AND END." VIET-NAM HAS ALMOST EVERYTHING IT

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NEEDS TO BE SUCCESSFUL, INCLUDING FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE.
US SUPPORTS VIET-NAM BUT IS NOT TRYING TO TAKE IT OVER.
ONLY THING WHICH VIET-NAM LACKS IS GOOD LEADERSHIP.

15. IN QUESTION PERIOD FOLLOWING HIS DISCOURSE ON GENERAL SITUATION, DAN REPEATED HIS BELIEF THAT NO MORE TROOPS ARE NEEDED. "THERE ARE ENOUGH US TROOPS HERE, PROBLEM IS TO MAKE BETT ER
USE OF THEM, ESPECIALLY OF VIETNAMESE TROOPS." DAN ADMITTED THAT MILITARY SITUATION HAS IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY IN PAST

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YEAR. IN ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT'S QUESTION, HOWEVER, DAN SAID HE DID NOT AGREE THATRECENTLY ANNOUNCED 50,000 TROOP INCREASE IS NECESSARY; "I DON'T THINK THEY SHOULD COME."

16. DAN WAS ASKED WHETHER MEMBERS OF NLF SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT "AT THIS TIME" THEY SHOULD NOT. THEY MUST FIRST SHOW THEIR GOOD WILL AND RSPECT FOR LAW. IF THEY TURN IN THEIR WEAPONS AND BEHAVE THEMSELVES FOR 4-5 YEARS, "THEY MIGHT BE CONSIDERED AS A POLITICAL ORGANIZATION."

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17. IN OTHER CAMPAIGN PRESS STATEMENTS, HAWK CANDIDATE PHAN HUY CC INVITED THREE AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS TO HIS HOME ON AUG 27, WHERE THEY WERE SUBJECTED TO TWO-HOUR HARANGUE ON NECESSITY FOR TOTAL VICTORY. CO REPORTEDLY BLASTED BOTH DR. DAN (FOR HIS STATEMENT THAT NO MORE TROOPS ARE NEEDED) AND GENERAL THIEU (FOR HIS PROPOSED BOMBING PAUSE). CO CLAIMED THAT PEOPLE OF VIET-NAM AGREE WITH HIS POSITION COMPLETELY, AS ELECTION RESULTS WILL SHOW. ONE CORRESPONDENT REMARKED THAT CO'S STATEMENTS MAKE THE OTHER CANDIDATES SEEM EMINENTLY REASONABLE.
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